



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Tom Dennis Hopper

FORMER FLINT CHIROPRACTOR AND BUSINESSMAN SENTENCED

A former Flint chiropractor -- who was also a mortgage loan officer in Florida was sentenced on January 17, 2006 to 33 months in prison for a wire fraud involving \$1,829,000 that was embezzled from a title company, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Thom Dennis Hopper, 57, of Trinity, Florida, was sentenced by Senior United States District Judge Paul V. Gadola.

This is a significant sentence. Its imposition by Judge Gadola evidences the serious negative impact that mortgage and real estate fraud has on its victims. Our office will continue to dedicate resources to strongly fighting real estate fraud in its various forms and we will aggressively pursue any individuals who continue to perpetrate these types of crimes, U.S. Attorney Murphy said.

Hopper pleaded guilty in April 2005 to one count of wire fraud. The offense arose from Hoppers operation of Klear Title, LLC, of Flint, which acted as an agent for Commonwealth Land Title company and received moneys in escrow pending completion of real estate transactions. Hopper was the President of Klear Title.

At the time of his plea, Hopper admitted to the Court that between January 24 and April 11 of 2002, he had wrongfully misappropriated and diverted such escrow moneys from a trust account by wiring them to an account he personally controlled at the Bank of Nova Scotia in Ottawa, Canada. At the sentencing hearing the court found that this money had then been used by Hopper for personal expenditures, including a \$1,000,000 down payment toward purchase of the Tampa Bay Storm (an Arena Football League team) and a \$635,000 purchase of a race track near Ottawa.

At the sentencing hearing yesterday, Judge Gadola ruled that the United States Sentencing Commission's guideline range for Hopper's offense was 30-37 months, and he imposed a sentence of 33 ½ months as reflected in the parties' plea agreement. Judge Gadola said that the guidelines should actually be higher to reflect the true seriousness of Hopper's offense. He sentenced Hopper to the maximum allowed under the agreement; ordered that he make restitution to Commonwealth in the amount of \$1,829,000; and directed that he serve a three-year term of supervised release after completion of his prison term. Judge Gadola further directed that Hopper immediately be taken into custody by the United States Marshal to begin serving his sentence.

The case was investigated by the Flint office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert W. Haviland.